

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

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NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 AID-20 EB-11

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION TWO OF TWO MONTEVIDEO 1176

PROBLEMS WITH ITS PHILOSOPHY. THOUGH WEAK IN ITS SPECIFIC PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT THIS PHILOSOPHY, THE NEW DEVELOPMENT PLAN NEVERTHELESS GIVES GROUNDS FOR SOME OPTIMISM THAT MILITARY LEADERS DO NOT NOW INTEND TO PUSH FOR INCREASED STATE INTERVENTION IN THE ECONOMY AND ITS MANIPULATION FOR SHORT- TERM GOALS.

7 THE TRADITIONAL PARTIES- POLITICAL LEADERS FOR BOTH THE COLORADO AND BLANCO PARTIES REMAN SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVE AND HIGHLY UNCERTAIN ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THEM OF THE MILITARY S NEW CENTRAL ROLE. MOST ARE HOPING FERVENTLY THAT SERIOUS CONFLICTS CAN BE AVOIDED WHICH COULD AFFECT THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS IN 1976. THE PRESIDENTS " NATIONAL ACCORD" COALITION IS FRAYED AT THE EDGES , BUT MOST OF ITS MEMBERS SEE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE ADMINISTRATION. BLANCO OPPOSITION LEADER FERREIRA ALDUNATE HAS NOW APPARENTLY GIVEN UP ANY SERIOUS HOPE OF ELECTIONS BEFORE 1976 AND CONTINUES TO SEEK TO BUILD HIS FORCES BY ACROSS- THE- BOARD OPPOSITION TO PRESIDENT BORDABERRY AND AN OPEN DOOR TO DISAFFECTED " FRENTE" ELEMENTS. ONE SENIOR COLORADO LEADER, LAMENTING WHAT HE TERMED THE REFUSAL OF THE PRESIDENT TO ASSERT STRONG CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP, DECLARED THAT THE MAIN ROLE OF THE TRADITIONAL PARTIES NOW IS TO, " SHORE UP THE FACADE"( OF CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT). IN GENERAL, MOST OF THES LEADERS SEE THE ROLE OF CIVILIAN POLITICIANS IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS AS SOMEWHAT MARGINAL " WHIPPING BOYS". THEIR MAIN HOPE NOW RESTS WITH SRUVIVING THE NEXT THREE YEARS UNTIL  
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NEW ELECTIONS WHICH THEY BELIEVE CAN BE A VEHICLE FOR REASSERTION OF THEIR POSITION.

8. THE LEFT- THE MARXIST AND NON- MARXIST LEFT, AS REPRESENTED PRINCIPALLY BY THE " FRENTE AMPLIO", CONTINUES ITS CAUTIOUS " OPEN OPTIONS" STANCE TOWARD THE MILITARY. EARLIER OPTIMISM REGARDING POSSIBLE OPENINGS WHICH THE MILITARY'S LEADERSHIP WOULD ALLOW HAVE BEEN GREATLY DAMPENED BY THE ARMED FORCES " IRRECONCILABLE" POSITION WITH REGARD TO ITS ACTIONS AND THOSE ESPOUSED BY THE " FRENTE". RADICAL ELEMENTS WITHIN THE " FRENTE AMPLIO", AND IN OTHER GROUPS SUCH AS THE CNT AND THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED FEUU STUDENT FEDERATION, CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR MORE VIGOROUS OPPOSITION TO THE ARMED FORCES. THUS FAR, HOWEVER, " FRENTE" LEADERS HAVE CONTINUED TO STRESS THE COMPATIBILITY OF THEIR GOALS WITH THOSE OF THE MILITARY AND TO PROCLAIM A COMMON " ANTI- OLIGARCHY" FRONT WITH THE ARMED FORCES.

9. THE PUBLIC- ASIDE FROM THOSE URUGUAYANS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN ONE OF THE ABOVE GROUPS, THE PUBLIC REMAINS LARGELY INDIFFERENT TO AND ON THE MARGIN OF CURRENT EVENTS. RECENT OPINION SURVEYS INDICATE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR MILITARY " GUIDANCE" OF THE GOVERNMENT, BUT REJECTION OF THE NOTION OF THE MILITARY TAKING POWER ITSELF. THE PUBLIC PRESTIGE OF CIVILIAN POLITICIANS HAS NEVER BEEN LOWER WHILE THAT OF THE ARMED FORCES CONTINUES HIGH. THUS FAR, A MAJORITY OF URUGUAY'S POPULATION IS MUCH MORE CONCERNED WITH PROBLEMS OF DAY- TO- DAY LIVING, RATHER THAN LARGER QUESTIONS OF MILITARY OR CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP. WE DO, HOWEVER, DETECT SOME GROWING PUBLIC OPTIMISM THAT SOME CHRONIC PROBLEMS MAY BE IMPROVED.

10. PERSPECTIVES- THE PRESENT RELATIVE TRANQUILITY ON THE URUGUAYAN POLITICAL SCENE RESTS UPON THE FACT THAT NONE OF THE MAJOR GROUPS INVOLVED SEE IT IN THEIR BASIC INTEREST TO DISTURB THE BALANCE. THE MILITARY APPEARS SATISFIED THAT IT RETAINS THE UPPER HAND; THE PRESIDENT IS CONTENT WITH THIS SITUATION BECAUSE IT IS BASICALLY IN HARMONY WITH HIS OWN POLITICAL CONSERVATISM AND GOALS; LEADERS OF THE TRADITIONAL PARTIES SEE THE CURRENT STABILITY AS OFFERING THE BEST HOPE FOR 1976 ELECTIONS; AND THE LEFT IS ANXIOUS NOT TO FORECLOSE ANY OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN ITS OWN POSITION HOWEVER, GIVEN THE MILITARY'S INSISTENCE ON CHANGE AND REFORM, THE POLITICAL SITUATION WILL NOT BE STATIC BUT RATHER DYNAMIC.

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IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE SPINDLY LEGS UPON WHICH THE CURRENT

BALANCE OF FORCES RESTS ARE ELASTIC ENOUGH TO SURVIVE A MAJOR CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ANY OF THE MAIN POLITICAL FORCES. A ROUND OF SERIOUS LABOR DISPUTES AND STRIKES, REFUSAL BY THE CONGRESS TO APPROVE NEW LAW CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL BY THE MILITARY, FRUSTRATIONS WITHIN MILITARY OR WITH THE BUREAUCRACY IN IMPLEMENTING THE MILITARY' S PROGRAM, ALL COULD PROVIDE THE SPARK FOR A NEW AND SERIOUS POLITICAL CRISIS. DESPITE THE MILITARY LADERS' HOPES TO GUID RATHER THAN GOVERN, THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION REMAINS UNSTABLE. WHEN NEW DISEQUILIBRIUMS ARISE INT EH PRESENT BALANCE OF FORCES, THE MILITARY AMY WELL BE DRAWN FURTHER AND FURTHER TOWARD DIRECT CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

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